

both in the seventeenth-century and today is to move too quickly from developments in the natural sciences to revisions in theology. Only when the discoveries of science are integrated into a broader philosophy of nature ought they to play a role in theological reflections.

Might it not be the case, as Christoph Theobald briefly suggested, that a return to Thomistic categories of analysis would provide a useful partner for any dialogue between theology and the natural sciences? In this respect it would be good to remember that Thomas Aquinas does not have an argument for the existence of God based on design, at least as design has come to be seen in modern thought.

WILLIAM E. CARROLL

**MYSTICAL CONSCIOUSNESS: WESTERN PERSPECTIVE AND DIALOGUE WITH JAPANESE THINKERS** by Louis Roy OP, *SUNY Press, Albany, 2003, Pp. xxi + 229, \$20.95 pbk.*

This book is an attempt to clarify elements of a philosophical theory of mysticism. The work entails a conversation bringing together Western thinkers (classical, medieval and modern) as well as certain twentieth century Japanese philosophers working out of the Zen Buddhist tradition (Nishitani Keiji, Hisamatsu Shin'ichi and D.T. Suzuki). The author is of the Lonergan School.

The first chapters of the book deal with the work of Brentano, Husserl, Sartre, Searle, John Crosby, Daniel Helminiak, Elizabeth Morelli, Sebastian Moore, Robert Forman, James Price, David Granfield. Lonergan's epistemology sets much of the agenda. The second section of the book is given to a review of the mystical theologies of Plotinus, Eckhart and Schleiermacher. The final section of the book is a discussion of the work of certain figures of the Kyoto School of Zen philosophy, broadly understood so as to include D.T. Suzuki. The material in all these chapters is quite technical and is not intended to be an introduction to either Western mysticism or the Kyoto School. There is also a brief conclusion that raises various topics and a glossary.

One of Roy's major points has to do with the recognition of a consciousness-in-general which is to be located between ordinary object-oriented awareness and mystical consciousness in the proper sense. In developing his view, Roy constructs three types of consciousness. Ordinary object-oriented consciousness (what Roy calls 'consciousness C') is 'positional' in that it is focused on an object. There is also a non-positional awareness ('consciousness B') that underpins object-oriented consciousness. This consciousness without an object pervades all mental states and operations and is implicit in

specific acts of knowing. Mystical consciousness ('consciousness A') refers to what Plotinus called 'consciousness beyond consciousness' and what Merton called 'super consciousness'. Roy thinks that consciousness A is also related to the Kyoto School's notion of Buddhist emptiness. According to Roy, all three types of consciousness are continuous with each other. Consciousness B is always implicit in consciousness C. Consciousness A is integrally related to consciousness B. Any attempt to reflect on consciousness B or consciousness A, however, sunders their immediacy. Therefore, a theory of mystical consciousness requires an adequate epistemology. More specifically, an adequate theory of mystical consciousness requires turning away from the natural sciences and critical philosophy to an epistemology sensitive to degrees of self-knowledge integrally related to human acts of self-transcendence. In this regard, Roy believes that Lonergan's cognitive theory has 'momentous implications' for an understanding of mysticism.

In Lonergan's view, mysticism is not of a wholly different order than ordinary conscious awareness. Mysticism can be situated within an overall account of human self-transcendence through concrete acts of knowing and loving. In Lonergan's system, a first level of self-transcendence, the empirical level, has to do with perceptual adjustments and modifications of the environment. The intellectual level takes the human person beyond perception to ask questions of 'what', 'why' and 'how'. In the third level, the rational, questions for reflection arise reflecting the need for doubt, verification and judgment of facts. The fourth level has to do with responsibility. In this level, questions for deliberation arise in which behaviour is shaped in accordance with judgments of value. For Lonergan, self-transcendence within this fourth level is fully actualized by 'loving in an unrestricted fashion'.

Roy uses these clarifications to develop his notion of 'consciousness B' as a way to link objective awareness (consciousness C) with mysticism (consciousness A). The dynamism of our conscious intentionality (consciousness C) allows us to account for non-positional consciousness (consciousness B) and to employ this account analogically in a non-reductive theory of mystical consciousness (consciousness A). The continuity of all three types of consciousness (C, B, and A), allows Roy to speculate, very briefly, about two possible types of mysticism. One kind of mysticism entails the complete loss of consciousness C. Individuality is entirely absorbed into the 'True Self' or 'Godhead'. A second kind of mysticism allows for consciousness A to coexist seamlessly with conscious C through the mediation of consciousness B. Roy makes no attempt to compare Western mystics and Japanese Zen thinkers using this typology. I hope he returns to this topic in detail in a future work.

This last observation suggests that the reader needs to appreciate what the author seeks to accomplish in this book. Roy makes a helpful clarification of the book's purpose in his conclusion where he tells the reader that his book has not been intended as 'a full-fledged dialectic of opposed theses'. Neither is the book intended as an exercise in philosophical or doctrinal theology. Instead, the aim of the book is 'to show the similarities, indeed the convergence, between several Western and Japanese intimations of what escapes the purview of ordinary consciousness'. In this, Lonergan's cognitive theory is the *norma normans, sed non normata*, and certainly not allowed to become part of any dialogue among Christian mystics and Buddhists. This is a difficult work, certainly of interest to Lonergan scholars.

JAMES FREDERICKS

**RELIGION: THE MODERN THEORIES** by Seth D. Kunin, *Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh, 2003, Pp. viii + 232, £45.00 hbk., £14.99 pbk.*

The blurb on the cover of this book tells us that it is a 'splendid textbook for an undergraduate course in religion', and so I assumed that it would only take a couple of hours to produce this review. How mistaken I was.

It is, admittedly, a book that, in the space of 222 pages, covers remarkably adequately the significant thinking of social scientists on religion from the Marx of 1844 ('It is the *opium* of the people') to Steve Bruce in 2002. Overall it is a balanced book, though it could be criticised for allocating rather too much space to English-language writers. However, it is fairly densely written, assumes quite a lot of background knowledge, and if undergraduates are going to use this book they will have to have gone through a fairly solid preparatory course.

What, though, does it offer to the readers of *New Blackfriars*? Theologians who are interested in knowing what sociologists and anthropologists have been saying about religion could find it useful, but they will need to do some additional reading in the area. Moreover, they should be warned that there is hardly anything in the book about how through religious practices human beings may (or may not) deepen their understanding of God. In fact, the author is clearly very reluctant to use the terms 'superhuman' and 'supernatural', and it is easy to acquire the impression that he has little time for theology. Yet Dr Kunin is Head of the School of Divinity, Religious Studies and Philosophy at the University of Aberdeen, and his publications include studies of aspects of Judaism and, most recently, *A Companion to Religious Studies and Theology*, which he has co-edited.